

Minutes (Approved)  
Retreat of County Council-elect  
November 20-21, 2014

The County Council-elect met in retreat at the Retreat and Conference Center at Bon Secours, 1525 Marriottsville Road, Marriottsville, MD, on November 20 and 21, 2014. Members present on both days were Calvin Ball, Chair; Greg Fox; Mary Kay Sigaty; Jen Terrasa; and Council member-elect Jon Weinstein.

The meeting convened at 8:30 a.m. on November 20. Jeff Bronow, Department of Planning and Zoning, presented information detailing demographic trends based on the United States census and projections, housing patterns, and income data.

Beginning at 10:00 a.m., a panel including the following members joined the Council: Bitu Dayhoff, Director, Head Start; Tom Carbo, Director, Housing Department; Jackie Scott, Deputy Director, Citizen Services; Felicia Pailen and Dr. Jackie Douge, Howard County Health Department. The panel discussed service implications drawn from the data provided by Mr. Bronow. They discussed the relative merits of moving head start enrollees into existing programs in the public schools and expanding Head Start to full-day as an alternative to adding full day programs in public schools. Expanded services for an aging and increasingly diverse linguistically population were discussed as was the need for expanded affordable housing opportunity. The following additional information was requested: 1) the numbers (costs and populations) for adding students to Head Start full day (J. Weinstein); 2) a breakout by age and type of housing of families earning less than \$50,000 (Fox); 3) a breakout of occupants of moderate income housing units of those working in the county and those working outside the county (Fox); 4) An 8 year historical perspective of people living in moderate income housing unit (Fox); 5) a description of public-private partnerships that exist for housing (Weinstein). Jackie Scott promised that representatives of the Department of Citizen Services would meet with the Council on their twenty-year plan.

Immediately following, a panel composed of Donna Wells, Director, Mental Health Authority; Gary Gardiner, Chief of Police; and William Goddard, Chief of Fire and Rescue joined the panel. The medical director of the Fire Department, Dr. Seaman, and a coordinator of mental health services from the Police Department, Sgt. Jennifer Reidy, joined the Council and panel. A discussion followed focusing on the collaborative service model adopted by the departments to help provide services to prevent violence among the mentally ill population and to provide mental health services necessary to those who enter the public safety intake system.

Council members adjourned for lunch, where County Executive-elect Allan Kittleman gave brief greetings, and former *Baltimore Sun* reporter Larry Carson discussed communicating with the public in an era of declining print newspaper influence.

At 1:14 p.m., State Treasurer Nancy Kopp joined the Council members-elect to discuss the functions of her office and the State's projections of revenues for the immediate future and for the forthcoming term. She also discussed the State's debt, the Spending Affordability Committee's recommendations and their implications for State sharing of costs for school construction, changes in the Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) accounting rules, economies the State made in health benefits for retirees, and the implications of these changes for their meetings with bond rating agencies.

Dr. Roy Meyers, Professor of Policy at the University of Maryland Baltimore County (UMBC), spoke about communicating with the public about the budget. He urged use of statistics to provide accountability measures for outcomes of programs in the County's budget. He discussed the Baltimore City and State models and urged a simple reporting system with buy-in from the Executive and Council.

At 2:00 p.m., a panel composed of Ray Wacks, former Howard County Budget Director; Larry Twele, CEO of the Economic Development Authority; and Stan Milesky, Director of the Finance Department addressed the local economy and budget. Ray Wacks talked about local revenues, including property and income taxes and the effect of the economy, past and projected, on those revenues. He also talked about possible reductions in State aid to local governments and spending constraints for fiscal year 2016. Mr. Twele addressed trends in employment sectors and housing and commercial rental and vacancy rates and trends.

A panel convened at 3:00 p.m. addressed the adequacy of public facilities and implications of the act for meeting housing and development needs in the future. Joel Gallihue, Board of Education staff; Jim Irvin, Director of Public Works; and Michael Harrison, Homebuilders' Association spoke. Mr. Gallihue and Mr. Irvin described the history of the 20 year old law and noted its shortcomings in a contemporary context. Mr. Irvin noted that the funding paucity for State road construction has made it impossible to meet standards. He noted that any changes to the Act, like the original act, would require a compromise between those who want amenities and those who want to develop. Mr. Harrison said that schools, not roads, are the obstacle to development of the kind desired by his members.

The final panel for the day addressed revitalization. Panelists were Marsha McLaughlin, Director of the Department of Planning and Zoning; Ian Kennedy, Director of Communications, the Horizon Foundation; Mark Thompson, Director of Downtown Development; and Greg Fitchitt, Vice President of Development, Howard Hughes Corporation. Updates were provided on projects in Downtown Columbia, Long Reach Village Center, the Columbia Flier Building, and Merriweather. The Council discussed financial implications of these projects and the timing of development, renovation, and completion of the various projects planned or underway.

The meeting closed at 5:00 p.m. on Thursday and resumed at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, November 21.

The following staff in the County's Office of Law participated in the briefings and discussion from 8:45 until 11:30 a.m.: Margaret Ann Nolan, County Solicitor; and attorneys Jim Vannoy, Beverly Heydon, Paul Johnson, Barry Sanders, and Lewis Taylor. Ms. Nolan provided an overview of the functions and operations of the Office of Law, including a discussion of how the office manages its dual role of advising both Executive and Legislative branches. Mr. Vannoy reviewed the Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act. Beverly Heydon discussed the County's ethics laws and financial disclosure requirements. Mr. Johnson and Mr. Sanders discussed the Council's zoning functions, including appointment of the Board of Appeals. Mr. Taylor discussed the Council's alcoholic beverage licensing and regulation roles and the State law which governs it.

The final panel commenced at 11:45 a.m. It included Dr. Filiz Tabak, Professor of Management and Leadership, Towson University, who discussed the challenge of moving into a leadership role and the importance of distinguishing between the leader's functions and those delegated to staff. Linda McMillan and Craig Howard, Senior Legislative Analysts for the Montgomery County Council and that Council's Office of Legislative Oversight discussed that County's process for organizing legislative

analysis and an annual research agenda. They noted that the committee structure and long-term life of legislation allows in-depth review and discussion; however, they suggested that similar study could be accomplished in large measure before legislation is introduced, given Howard County's different Charter provisions.

The training portion of the retreat concluded at 12:45 p.m.